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THE PEOPLES OF SIBERIA

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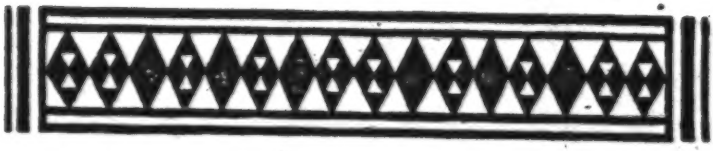

THE KORYAKS

V. V. ANTROPOVA
(based on data by S. N. Stebnitskiy and N. B. Shnakenburg)

General Information

The Koryaks are the nearest southern neighbors of the Chukchi. The name "Koryaks," given this people in the second half of the 17th century, stems from the Koryak root kor—"reindeer." The basis for this name was probably the locative case of this root—korak, or "those who are around reindeer." In former times, Koryaks had no general name for themselves. The reindeer-breeding Koryaks called themselves Chavchyvav (Chavchyv); they were also known by this name among various groups of sedentary Koryaks. In ethnographic literature they are known as Chavchuvens. The coastal Koryaks called themselves Nymyl''u, the singular of which was Nymyl''yn. This was derived from the root nym, nymnym—"village," "place of residence"—and thus means "residents" or "villagers." This designation gave rise to the name "Nymylany," which is widely used in the Soviet press. However, this name is evidently not the real self-designation of the entire people. 101

Today, in connection with the process of consolidation of dispersed Koryak groups, the term "Koryak" is beginning to acquire general usage. It is already being accepted as the name and the self-designation of the entire people, but along with it the term "Nymylan" may also be encountered, as applied to the entire people, both orally and in the local press.

The Chukchi who live in the northern part of the Koryak National Okrug sometimes call the Koryaks Tann'o (sing. Tann'ytan). The same name is occassionally used by Koryaks for the Chukchi. At the time of the Chukchi-Koryak wars, the word "tann'ytan" meant "foreigner," "alien," "enemy." [648] Today it has lost its original meaning and is used merely as the name of a people: in the Koryak language it describes the Chukchi, and in Chukchi, the Koryaks. The Itel'mens call the Koryaks Ta luan.

In the past, the Koryaks were subdivided into the following 9 territorial groups: 1) Chavchuvens—reindeer-breeders (constituting approximately one-half of the entire people), living throughout the entire okrug, but principally in the interior; 2) Kamentsy—a group that was different economically, ethnographically and linguistically; they inhabited the larger part of the coast of Penzhina Bay; 3) Parentsy, who lived along the Paren' River, in the village of Paren', on the east coast of Taygonos Peninsula; 4) Itkantsy, who also lived on the east coast of the same peninsula, in three villages known by 619

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the common name of Itkana (Upper, Middle and Lower); 5) Apukintsy, who lived at the mouth of the Apuka River and farther north, along the coast of the Bering Sea; 6) Kereks—a small coastal group, living northeast of the Apukintsy along the coast of the Bering Sea, from Natal'ya Bay in the southwest to Cape Navarin in the northeast; 7) Alyutortsy—the second largest group, inhabiting the large area of the Kamchatka Isthmus, from the village of Tymlaty in the south to the village of Olyutorka (Bering Sea coast) and Rekinniki and Podkagernoye (the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk); 8) Karagintsy—a group close in language to the Alyutortsy, living from the village of Tymlaty in the north to Uka in the south (on the east coast of the Kamchatka Peninsula); 9) Palantsy—distributed in 5 villages along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk, from the village of Lesnaya in the north to that of Vayampolka in the south.

The census of 1926-1927 set the number of Koryaks at 7434 persons, of whom some 55% were nomads and some 45% settled.

At present almost all the Koryaks live within the bounds of the Koryak National Okrug of the Kamchatskaya Oblast. Only an insignificant number of Koryaks live outside the okrug—in the Chukchi National Okrug (the Kereks), and in the Bol'sheretskiy and Petropavlovskiy Rayons of the Kamchatskaya Oblast. The Koryak (National) Okrug is divided into 4 rayons: Penzhinskiy, with its center in the village of Kamenskoye (Vaykynan); Olyutorskiy, with its center at the village of Tilichiki (Tylliran); Tigil'skiy, its center at the village of Tigil' (Vuyvyn); and Karaginskiy, its center at the village of Ossora. The center of the okrug is the village of Palana in the Tigil'skiy Rayon.

The Koryak National Okrug of the Kamchatskaya Oblast lies between 56°-65°N and 158°-174°E. The unfavorable average temperatures and the wide expanses of tundra and forest-tundra, despite the relatively southerly position of the okrug, lend a harsh quality to its environment. Nevertheless, the natural conditions of the territory, which extends almost from the Arctic Circle in the north to the latitude of Moscow in the south, are not homogeneous. Their diversity is intensified by the complex mountain relief of the area. The extreme northwestern corner of the okrug—the Upper Omolon Basin—is the highest spot, and most continental in climate. This area belongs to the forest zone, although coniferous forests occupy relatively small areas, while the predominant terrain consists of lichen-grown and other tundras, with scrub thickets in the mountains and river valleys. There are also grassy swamps and meadowlands.

The middle part of the Penzhina River Basin and adjacent areas on the Kamchatka Isthmus are characterized by a predominance of hills and low plains. The continental character of the climate lessens as one approaches the Sea of Okhotsk. Despite its more southerly position, this entire territory belongs to the forest-tundra zone. It has no coniferous forests, but abounds in scrub thickets, mountainside tundras and rocky areas in the mountains. There are even more mountain tundras in the east of the okrug—among the Koryak uplands and in the northeastern part of the Kamchatka Isthmus.

The rest of the territory of the okrug embraces the swampy unforested coastal lowlands of the northwestern part of the Kamchatka Peninsula and the western slope of the middle part of the Middle Kamchatka Range. Stone-birch groves, thickets of cedar and alder, and dry moss and other tundras extend over the mountainsides and mountaintops; in the river valleys in the mountains and foothills, vegetation consists of tall deciduous forests (poplar, alder, willow, Korean cedar, and, farther south, birch) and meadows. In this part of the okrug, which lies in the temperate zone, the climate is moist and

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relatively mild. However, it is swept by cold sea winds; in winter, there are severe snowstorms and a great deal of snow. 13

The animal world is represented by forest fauna (fox, squirrel, ermine, brown bear, chipmunk, black grouse, wood-grouse, magpies, nutcrackers, crows, etc.), tundra fauna (polar fox in the north, polar bear, encountered in the east, reindeer, polar partridge) and mountain fauna (mountain sheep), as well as some living fossils, such as yevrazhta hamster and Siberian marmot. One should also mention the variety of sea birds—eider, gulls, etc., and vast numbers of migratory birds which come in spring, including geese, ducks, snipe, swans, etc. The rivers, lakes and sea waters abound in fish. Most important for fishing are salmon species (Siberian humpback, silver chinook, etc.), herring, uyek (Mallotus villosus socialis), cod, etc. The Sea of Okhotsk and Bering Sea abound in sea animals (whale, killer whale, white whale, and several species of seal). 136

The Koryak language belongs, together with Chukchi and Itel'men, to the same group of northeastern paleo-Asiatic languages. It is close to Chukchi in vocabulary and morphology. The languages of the Chukchi and Koryaks are so similar that they understand each other. 197

The Koryak subgroups enumerated above speak 9 dialects. The main distinctions among the dialects are phonetic. They differ to a considerably smaller degree morphologically, and even less, in vocabulary. By their principal phonetic and morphological characteristics, the dialects fall into two groups—southern and northern. The dialects of the Koryak language probably stem from the languages of the Koryak tribes into which the Koryaks were divided in the past.

The problem of Koryak origin has not been studied sufficiently. The few archaeological investigations carried out in the northwestern part of Kamchatka and along the Okhotsk coast have uncovered remains of old dugouts, stone and bone implements, and pottery. These findings may evidently be attributed to the ancestors of the modern Koryaks. The Evens of the Okhotsk Sea coast attribute the dugouts to Koryaks and point to the clay utensils as a characteristic feature of the life of the old inhabitants. 172

In the 17th-19th centuries, the villages of the coastal Koryaks extended considerably farther than they do today. Koryak villages on the Okhotsk Sea coast reached to Tauy Gulf. On the coast of the Bering Sea, their villages were encountered in the 17th-18th centuries, almost up to the mouth of the Anadyr'. The expansion of the Evens on the Okhotsk Sea coast, which was especially intensive in the 18th century, narrowed the territory of the sedentary Koryaks. While the coastal Koryaks may be seen as the direct heirs of the most ancient neolithic culture of northern Kamchatka and the Okhotsk Sea coast, the problem of the origin of the reindeer-breeding Koryaks—the Chavchuvens—is unclear. Some investigators consider them as the descendants of coastal Koryaks, who developed reindeer-breeding under the influence of their neighbors, the Evens. The question of the dates and manner of the spread of reindeer-breeding among the Koryaks requires further study. 175 101 174 101

The oral folklore of the peoples of the Far Northeast attests to the close relations between Koryaks and their neighbors—the Chukchi, Evens, Yukagirs and Itel'mens. These relations were expressed, on the one hand, in intertribal barter, and on the other, in armed conflicts. Numerous Koryak and Chukchi legends relate that the northern neighbors of the Koryaks—the Chukchi—attacked them, drove off their reindeer, and carried off men and women as captives. Koryak folklore also tells of hostile clashes between coastal and reindeer-breeding Koryaks, which occurred before the coming of the Russians. 173 648

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175 648 The first information about the Koryaks was received in Russia from the Cossacks Semen Dezhnev and Mikhail Stadukhin. The Russian moves from the Anadyr' Fort to Kamchatka began with the campaigns of Morozko (1690) and Atlasov (1697-1698). Arbitrary exaction of the fur-tax and, especially, abuses on the part of representatives of the tsar's government encountered Koryak resistance, in the form of armed attack on the units of tax-collectors.

During the latter half of the 18th century, the change in the Russian tax policy (decreased levies and establishment of a fixed tax) resulted in a cessation of the armed attacks on Russian units. The tsarist government also tried to make use of the wealthy upper stratum of Koryak society for its own benefit. Under the new regulations, the tax was submitted by the wealthy Koryaks, who were granted the right to collect it from the population. Supporting and strengthening the exploiting upper group in this manner, the tsarist government also admitted some of its representatives to administrative positions. Thus, the rich baptized toyon of the village of Kamenskoye, Semen Um'yavin, was even a member of the lower District Court during the reign of Catherine II.

In organizing the taxation, the local Russian administration formed administrative units ("clans"), which consisted of neighboring villages of coastal Koryaks and specified territorial groups of reindeer Koryaks. While helping to consolidate the power of the rich Koryaks heading these "clans," the tsarist government also left the Koryaks at the mercy of the commercial exploitation of Russian merchants.

[433] On the whole, the Koryaks lived in a state of subsistence economy in the latter 18th and in the 19th centuries. But side by side with barter between 439 the reindeer-breeding and the coastal Koryaks, there was also a gradual development of trade with Russians. In the 19th century, the Koryaks could not 175 longer manage without imported Russian goods: kettles, iron articles, tobacco, tea, etc. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, American goods also began to penetrate into Koryak territory. At that time, American traders had their own storehouses on the territory, as well as their own agents, and so on. Trade was usually attended by getting the natives drunk and swindling them, and brought enormous profits to the merchants and buyers.

175 During the latter half of the 18th century, closer ties developed between 177 the Koryaks and the Russians. At this time, Russian villages sprang up on Koryak territory, including Penzhino, Gizhiga, etc. From the Russians, the Koryaks obtained iron hunting and fishing implements, ready-made twine for their nets, more efficient instruments for working wood and bone, and so on. [342] Under the influence of Russian culture, some of the sedentary Koryaks began to live in frame houses. Russian manufactured goods came into daily use, including metal utensils, food products, and, to a lesser degree, textile [184] goods. The strongest cultural influence of the Russians was among the [55] southern Koryaks. Russian names and surnames became predominant among them.

184 433 Economy

In the past, the economic activities of the Koryaks consisted of reindeer-breeding, sea-animal hunting, fishing and hunting. The territorial groups listed earlier differed in their economic life. The Chavchuvens were typical reindeer-breeders. They knew nothing of sea hunting, and fur-animal hunting was to them only an auxiliary occupation; fishing was also unimportant. The economy of the Alyutortsy was unusual in that it combined fishing and

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sea hunting with reindeer-breeding. The remaining 7 groups of Koryaks—the Kamentsy, Parentsy, Itkantsy, Apukintsy, Kereks, Karagintsy and Palantsy—also maintained complex economies, with one or another occupation predominating. 184 433

Koryak reindeer-breeding was of two types. The first type—the keeping of large herds—existed among the Chavchuvens. In the early part of the 20th century, a small group of reindeer-breeders owned large herds, accounting for up to 80% of the total number of head. In the area of the Penzhina River, some reindeer-breeders owned 2-3 herds, adding up to as many as 10,000 reindeer. The pasturing of the large herds owned by the rich Koryaks was done by poor Koryaks who owned only a few reindeer or none at all, and were compelled to tend their master's herds in exchange for food and clothing. 184 233 [466] [556]

The reindeer provided the principal item of the reindeer-breeders' diet—meat, and the basic material for clothing and housing—hides, as well as tendons, of which thread was made. At the same time, the reindeer was to the reindeer-breeders the sole means of transportation. Hence, the entire life of the reindeer-breeding Koryaks was adapted to the demands of their basic occupation. In winter, the herd grazed near the encampment. As soon as the pasture was exhausted, the master drove out in a light sled, similar to that of the Chukchi and harnessed to a pair of deer, to search for another pasture. After that, the entire camp migrated to the new site, and the herdsmen drove the herd to the new pasture. Such migrations took place 4-5 times during the winter. In the spring, before the calving (in April), the females were separated from the rest of the herd. Calving time (May) was the hardest period for the reindeer-breeders. The newborn calves had to be protected from predators—wolves, foxes, wolverines and ravens, and also kept from freezing. At this time, the herdsmen had no rest either by day or by night. They were helped by members of their families, and even old men and children took part in guarding the herd in encampments where the human population was small. Afterwards, the herdsmen drove the herds for the whole summer into the mountains, which abounded in pasturelands. The correct choice of the summer pasture determined the welfare of the herd for the entire year. Summer pasturing required from the reindeer-breeder great skill, experience, and knowledge of the tundra and the reindeer's requirements. The encampment was situated at this period in a summer site, usually on the bank of a river abounding in fish. In autumn (at the end of September and beginning of October), the herdsmen brought the herd to the encampment. Meeting of the herd—one of the principal holidays of the reindeer-breeders—was attended by numerous rituals. After the first snow, the herd and the camp migrated to the winter range. 233 [825] [493] [492] 233 221 [592] [527]

The herding was done without dogs, which the Koryak reindeer-breeders did not use. Nimble feet, alert eyes and a leather lasso requiring great skill of the herdsmen—these were the means at his disposal to protect the herd from snowstorms and wolves in winter, from foxes and ravens in spring, during the calving season, and from mosquitoes and gnats in summer. 233

Another type of reindeer-breeding—that of small herds—existed among the Alyutortsy Koryaks. More than 50% of all the Alyutortsy kept reindeer, but few had herds as large as 1000 head. A characteristic feature of Alyutor reindeer-breeding was the use of dogs as the principal sled animals. Each household had one, two, three or more teams. Reindeer were used only for short trips without loads. [184] [492]

This type of reindeer-breeding was usually combined with sea hunting and fishing. All the Alyutortsy, with rare exceptions, went out on sea hunts, especially in spring, when they hunted on drifting ice floes. In summer, 184 225

184 In summer,
221 during the fish-runs, all reindeer-breeding Alyutortsy migrated to the
226 mouths of rivers, where they lived with their sedentary kinsmen and worked
233 with them, preparing stocks of fish for the winter. The reindeer herds remained at this time in the care of herdsmen—the boys of the family. This second type of Koryak reindeer-breeding originated much later than the first.

184 The hunting of sea animals (various species of seal and white whale) was
225 the principal occupation of the northern sedentary Koryaks, who lived on the coast of Penzhina Bay: Kamentsy, Parentsy, Itkantsy. It also played an important role among the rest of the sedentary Koryaks: the Kereks, Apukintsy, Palantsy, Karagintsy, and sedentary Alyutortsy.

[221] Sea hunting was done during two seasons: spring and fall. The spring season began in mid-March and ended in the latter part of June.

[492] The hunters, armed with rifles and spears, drove out in parties of 78 men, or more, by dogsleds on the sea ice, 5 to 10 kilometers from shore. The seals, which climbed out on the ice, were shot with rifles. The kill was loaded on the sled, and the hunters returned to their village either the same or the following day, after a night on the ice. In a party of 78 men, 2 usually had guns, while the rest brought in the catch, loaded it on the sled
[501] and transported it; some were simply onlookers. In May, when open water appeared among the ice floes, sea hunting was done in baydars (skin boats).

The fall season began in mid-September and ended in the latter half of November. The fall hunting was also done in baydars and barkasy [flat-bottomed plank boats]. The animals were caught with nets of sealskin strips.

[173] Long ago, the Koryaks hunted whales. According to legends and literary
[175] sources of the 18th century, the hunt was conducted with a huge net, woven of thick strips of leather. Large stones were used as sinkers. The net was attached to coastal cliffs and crags. Dozens of baydars, each with more than 10 hunters, armed with harpoons, sailed out into the sea. The hunters drove the whale into the net, in which it became entangled. The heavy sinkers made it impossible for the whale to swim out into the sea with the net. The hunters showered him with spears. Wounded and exhausted, the whale died, and the hunters joined forces to pull him ashore. The Alyutortsy also used joined boats instead of baydars in hunting whales.

237 The skins of sea animals were used for straps and boot-soles. The meat
262 and blubber were eaten and stocked. The blubber also provided light. To
438 the Kamentsy, Parentsy and Itkantsy, the products of sea hunting—blubber,
437 skins, and sometimes meat as well—served as the principal media of barter with the reindeer-breeders, from whom they obtained deerskins and meat.

Fishing had long been the main occupation of the eastern sedentary
184 Koryaks of the Bering Sea coast: the Karagintsy, the sedentary Alyutortsy
226 and the Apukintsy. Fishing was also important to the western sedentary Koryaks—the Palantsy, and the northern ones—the Kereks—and somewhat less for the settled Koryaks on the Penzhina—Kamentsy, Parentsy and Itkantsy. Fishing was done throughout the summer and early fall season—
[221] from mid-June to the middle of September.

226 The most widespread method of fishing was by means of barriers. The river was fenced off from either bank with two barriers of stakes and twigs. At the place where they met, the fishermen attached under the water a chiruch (a sack-net) or a "muzzle," made of strips of wood, laths or twigs. Such barriers were set in shallow places, where the fishermen could work during shoal runs without boats or kungasy [sailboats]. The "muzzles" were emptied several times a day. During the heavy runs of fish (Siberian salmon and other migrating salmon species), the Koryaks moved to the mouths of
[496] rivers. Here groups of households combined into cooperatives and fished

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with large nets sewn together from the smaller ones they owned individually. 226 [476]

Other methods of fishing included fishing with the aid of an iron hook (marik) and "dipper" nets. The fisherman stood up to his knees in water, holding in his hands an implement that looked like a large sack-net on a long pole. Sighting a fish, he quickly directed the net towards it, scooping it up and throwing it out on the gravel shore. This method was used in the beginning of the fish-run, before the cooperative set to work.

Most of the catch went into the making of yukola. The fish were disemboweled and hung to dry on special racks. The yukola (fish dried in the sun and the wind) was put away in storehouses—tents on high piles, covered with dry grass. Yukola was usually made by women, while fishing was done chiefly by men. The yukola was the principal food of the people all year; it was also used as feed for the dogs, in addition to "pickled fish"—freshly caught fish piled into a pit, covered with earth, and left to ferment until needed. 262 251 [462]

An important auxiliary occupation among both sedentary and nomad Koryaks was hunting, which was done solely by men. The fur animals hunted were fox, wolverine, otter, hare and ermine. 224 184 [462]

Fur-animal hunting was most important among the Palantsy, who lived in a region abounding in Kamchatka sable. These were trapped in nets. Other animals were hunted with guns. Foxes and smaller animals—yevrazhka hamster and ermine—were caught in springtraps. The latter two were usually hunted by adolescent boys. Hares and partridges were caught with a noose. In early spring, many hunters took meat animals—bears, Siberian marmot, wild reindeer and mountain sheep. Tundra animals were usually hunted without the aid of hunting dogs, which were owned by relatively few hunters. [883]

An important role in Koryak economy was taken by the gathering of wild plants. The gathering of edible roots, grasses and berries was women's work. Roots were obtained chiefly from mouse-nests. Searching out a mouse-nest, the woman dug it up with a special wooden hoe and took from it the store of edible roots prepared by the mice. The berries gathered were blueberry, cloudberry and crowberry. 222 [462]

Grass was used to make inner lining for boots, and was also woven into mats, baskets, bags and purses. The weaving of variously shaped baskets, from those in the shape of bowls and trays down to small oval boxes with lids, and also bags of various shapes and sizes was especially developed among the Karagin and Alyutor women. 285 184

The men widely engaged in carving bone and the horns of wild sheep. 321

One of the villages of the northern coastal Koryaks—the village of Paren' on Taygonos Peninsula, was long known for blacksmithery. The Paren' blacksmiths reforged accidentally gotten pieces of iron into knives famed throughout the Koryak territory and beyond it. Even in the early years of the current century, the local Koryak population preferred them to imported Russian and American knives. 326

Housing

The dwelling of the reindeer-breeding Koryaks (yaranga) was a tent, similar to the Chukchi yaranga (called yayan'a in the Chavchuven dialect, and raran'a in the Alyutor dialect). Cylindrical at the base and conical at the top, it had a framework of poles and was covered with reindeer skins, with the fur outside. The pelts to be used for covering the yaranga were scraped a little; some of the flesh side was peeled off, then it was kneaded and smoked to make it waterproof. For summer dwellings, the hair was removed, or else worn, old coverings were used. 342 281

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Drying skins.

342 removed, or else worn, old coverings were used. The main skeleton of the yaranga consisted of three thick poles, 3–4 meters long and inserted so as to form a large tripod. In a circle around them were set shorter vertical poles (1.5 to 2 m long) at a distance of one or two meters. These were connected at the top with horizontal beams, from which more poles ran to the top of the tripod. This frame was then covered with pelts. Light penetrated [394] into the dwelling through the smoke-opening above and through the entrance, when the skin serving as a door was thrown back.

Inside the yaranga, 3–4 canopies were attached to the horizontal beams. These canopies, made of reindeer skins, were occupied by separate families. [354] A canopy formed an enclosure of skins and was lighted by a lamp fueled with reindeer or seal fat. Inside the canopy, it was very warm, and during the day the front part was usually raised and left open.

[184] Among the Koryaks who nomadized in southern Kamchatka, yarangas usually had from 3 to 6 canopies, which were high enough to stand in without touching the ceiling. The canopies were very often cleaned and beaten out. Yarangas were built by women, and their size depended on the wealth of the inhabitants.

Most of the coastal Koryaks lived in semidugouts. The base of such a dwelling consisted of a large pit, 1–1.5 meters deep. The walls of the pit were reinforced with a paling of vertical logs, which formed an octagon. Each corner of the octagon was joined on the top, by means of a beam, with the tops of four main posts set in the center of the pit. On these beams were laid flat planks, forming the roof. The frame was covered with sod. At one side of the semidugout was a corridor, 2–3 meters long, with small doors at either end; this served as the summer entrance (or, to be more precise, [354] the spring and autumn entrance). Overhead, in the center of the roof, was a [417] square opening (0.5 × 0.5 m), which was at the same time a smoke vent, a window, and a winter entrance. Instead of a ladder, the Koryaks used a thick log, grooved to form steps. Outside on the roof, around the entrance (smoke vent), they built a funnel of poles (on the coast of Penzhina Bay), or of woven twigs (on the eastern coast), to protect the entrance from snow-
35 drifts. The funnel was supported by props. Inside the dwelling, low benches were built along three of the walls. These were covered with skins, and over them were hung sleeping canopies. A hearth was constructed at the wall on which the corridor opened. In winter, the corridor served as a storage room and a ventilator flue: there was a vent in its ceiling, and this was opened
342 when a fire was going in the hearth. A semidugout usually housed several
592 (2, 3 or more) related families (much like the reindeer-breeders' yaranga).
Some of them held as many as 30–40 inhabitants. When spring came, the
[177] Koryaks moved to tall huts, set on stilts. Later they began to use fabric tents.

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Weapons and utensils:
1–three-pronged spear with a throwing board for hunting birds; 2–spear with a stone tip, and detail of spear; 3–blubber lamp on a wooden stand; 4–sack-net for fishing; 5–a man's knife; 6–a woman's knife for cutting skins; 7–fire-making by means of friction.

Long ago, the villages of sedentary Koryaks were fortified. Some of the Koryak forts, such as the Olyutorskiy, were surrounded by an earth wall and looked like fortresses. The reindeer-breeders also surrounded their encampments with defensive walls of sleds, walrus skins and rocks. 361 712

The reindeer-breeders' encampments usually consisted of 3 or 4 tents. In winter they lived in mountain valleys shielded from the wind; in summer, at the mouths of rivers. The villages of the coastal Koryaks were comparatively populous and were situated near bays, convenient for hunting and 361 [221]

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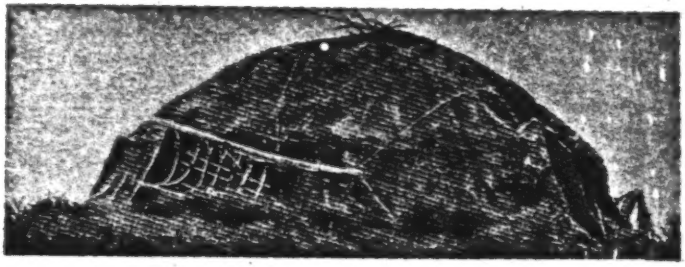

Reindeer-breeders' dwelling.

361 [172] fishing, or at river deltas. Kerek villages were small, consisting of only one or two dwellings. In the past, however, as seen from the ruins, they consisted of 10 to 15 dwellings.

170 342 Russian influence led to the appearance in the villages of the sedentary Koryaks of wooden frame houses as long ago as the middle of the last century.

Means of Transportation

492 493 [184] [171] The nomad Koryaks traveled by reindeer, the sedentary ones by dog-transport. The reindeer were harnessed to the sled; the Koryaks did not know of riding on reindeer. The reindeer sleds were similar to the Chukchi sled in construction. The light ones were arch-staved, with bent runners and a frame for sitting. The freight sleds were built in the same fashion, but more massively. Depending on the purpose of the freight-hauling sled, it was either surmounted by a hood (as in the sleds used for transporting children), or simply by a platform on poles (for carrying loads). There was also a special sled for carrying the frame of the dwelling, and so forth.

The light traveling sleds were usually harnessed to two reindeer; the freight-hauling sled was pulled by one reindeer. The reindeer were harnessed, not in front of the traveling sled, but on the left, so that the driver sitting in the sled could see everything ahead of him. When going downhill,

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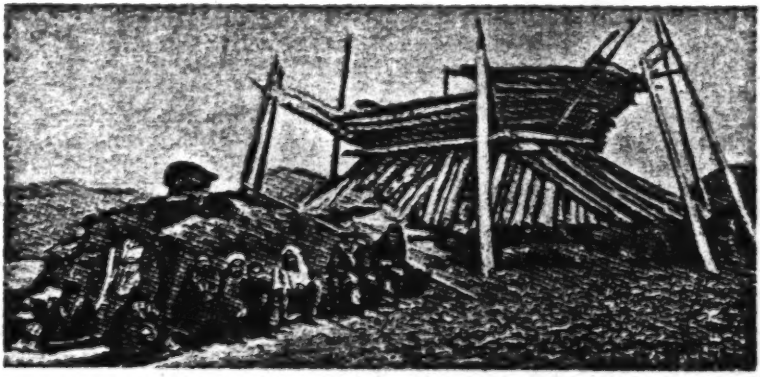

Dwelling of coastal Koryaks.

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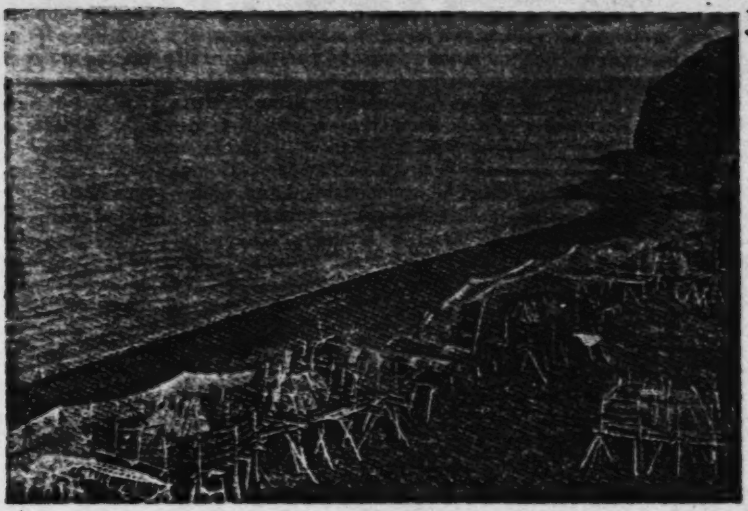

Summer village.

the reindeer remained slightly behind the driver on the left, restraining the sled from slipping down too fast. The reindeer were managed with the help of reins and a whip with bone tips. 492 493

The coastal Koryaks and the reindeer-breeding Alyutortsy kept sled dogs. A full team usually consisted of 10 to 12 animals. For dog-travel, the Koryaks used the four-staved sled, common throughout Eastern Siberia. It was 2-2.5 m long, and 0.5 m wide. Its parts were fastened with leather strips and sharpened pegs inserted into holes, made especially to receive them. The dogs were harnessed tandem, in pairs. They were directed by voice, and braked with the aid of a staff (about one meter long) with an iron tip. The standard load per sled was 150-160 kg in addition to the weight of the driver (kayur). [184]

The Koryaks learned horse-breeding from the Russians. Sedentary Koryaks (Palantsy, Karagintsy and southern Alyutortsy) kept horses, but they were used only in summer, as pack animals. In winter, they were left to their own devices, foraging for green fodder and often perishing of starvation, blizzards, frosts and wolves. Often the horses became so wild that their owner found it easier to walk dozens of miles with heavy loads rather than try to capture the horse. 231 [492] [177] [184]

For water transportation, the Koryaks used skin boats (baydars and kayaks). The Koryak baydar was similar to the Chukchi, but was considerably shorter and wider; its prow and stern were rounded. It was used by the Koryaks chiefly for hunting and fishing. 501 [171]

During the summertime, river transportation was by bat—boats hollowed out of thick tree trunks. They are extremely unstable in the water and require great skill of the helmsman, who steer with a long pole. Despite their untrustworthiness, these boats were also used by the Koryaks on the sea. In such cases, they were joined: two boats were linked with thick crossbars, leaving a space between them which was approximately equal to the width of one boat. Sometimes

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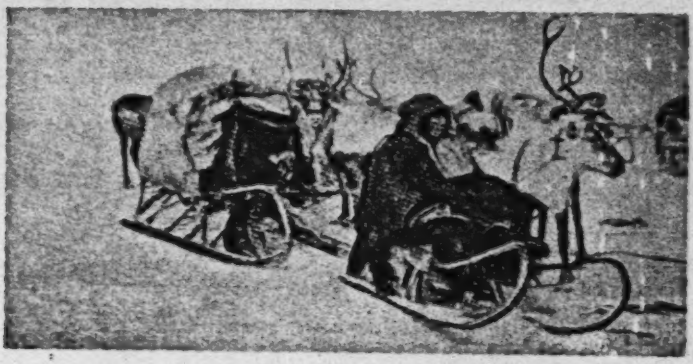

Light traveling sled and sled for transporting children.

501 boards were laid on top of the crossbars, and then the result resembled a raft.

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Clothing

The Koryak dress is most similar to that of the Chukchi. All Koryaks used the skins of young reindeer for both summer and winter clothing. Other skins (dogs, foxes, wolves and wolverines) were used only to trim the upper clothing, and to make hats and mittens.

The basic clothing of men consisted of an almost knee-length fur shirt without a lengthwise opening and with wide sleeves; this was worn with fur trousers and footwear. The shirt was made with a cowl and a small breastpiece, or without a cowl, but with a wide collar, edged with a seam. A cord was pulled through the seam, drawing the shirt together at the neck. The collar was usually trimmed with dog fur; black fur was considered the most beautiful.

Travel garb was cut in the same fashion, but longer. It consisted of two separate fur shirts, of which one was worn with the fur inside, and the other, with the fur outside. It was usually made with a cowl and a small breastpiece.

[184] [199] The clothing was usually worn directly on the body; the coastal Koryaks were the only ones to wear it frequently over fabric shirts, acquired from the local Russians.

Trousers were sewn of reindeer skins. Footwear was made of suede.

Women's winter dress was a wide fur overall with sleeves. The trousers were tucked into the boots below the knee. Very often they were made of vertical strips of white and dark fur. Above the overall, the women usually wore a fur shirt. It was of the same cut as the men's shirts, but decorated with tassels and embroidery.

A characteristic feature of Koryak winter dress (men's and women's), which distinguished it from the Chukchi dress, was the patterned strip at the hem—the opuvan. This was usually made of reindeer fur, but of a different color from the rest of the garment; sometimes it was decorated with mosaic designs. [531]

396

Making a hollowed boat.

The summer clothing of both the reindeer-breeders and the coastal Koryaks was of the same cut as the winter dress, but was made of soft leather. They also used worn winter clothing in summer. Until the age of 5 or 6, children wore fur overalls (shirts with a cowl, trousers and boots all sewn together). In the children's overall there was an opening at the bottom, covered with a flap, tied to the belt with thongs. In infants' clothing, this flap was lined with dry moss or fine willow shavings. 291 [854]

On their feet, both adults and children of 6 years or older wore short fur stockings, with the fur inside, and over them suede boots, made with the fur outside. The footwear was soled with deer "fetlocks," with bearded-seal skin, or more rarely, with bearskin.

On their heads, men and boys wore a fur hat in the shape of a hood. It was edged in front with dog fur, or the fur of otter or Siberian marmot. It was made in such a way that the ears and forehead could be tightly covered, or exposed, if the wearer chose to do so. Hats were usually adorned with beads and tassels. Often they were made of alternating strips of white and dark fur. Women wore hats more rarely than men. Among the reindeer-breeders, women wore hats under their cowls only during migrations; the rest of the time they went bareheaded, or with the hood raised over their heads.

In the southern areas, kerchiefs were worn. Mittens were made of deer suede, with the fur outside.

Girls and women wore their hair with a center part and two braids, which they intertwined with ribbons of soft leather, trimmed with beads. The men usually cut their hair, leaving only a circle around the head. 302

Women and girls wore earrings, which they made by threading bright-colored beads on sinew. Such earrings were sometimes long enough to reach the shoulder. 301

According to 18th-century sources, many coastal Koryaks wore clothing of sealskin. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, it was only 175 291

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Kayak.

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175 291 seldom that one could see trousers or footwear of sealskin. Eighteenth-century sources also state that "walking" Koryaks wore clothing of bird-skins. We know nothing of the shape of such dress. The ethnographic literature of the 19th century does not mention it.

Koryak burial clothes (a fur shirt, trousers and boots) were quite distinct. They were made of the skins of white deer. The knee-length fur shirt ended in the back with an elongation (a "tail"). The burial clothes were richly adorned with tassels, fringes and pieces of dog fur. The hem of the shirt was decorated with a strip of geometric embroidery and an edging of wolverine fur.

Man's traveling costume.

Food

184 262 The basic diet of the reindeer-breeding Koryaks consisted of reindeer meat, usually boiled. Bone marrow, kidneys, gristle and leg tendons were also eaten raw. In winter, pounded and crushed frozen meat was eaten. The reindeer-breeders also obtained meat and fat of sea animals from coastal Koryaks by barter. Fish was used in small quantities—boiled in summer, and yukola in winter. The yukola was prepared in the summer or obtained from the coastal Koryaks.

[291] The diet of the various sedentary groups depended on the character of their economic activities. The basic food was fish: boiled in summer, and in the form of yukola or fermented in winter. The upper part of the fish-head (brain, gristle, eyes) was eaten raw and considered a delicacy. Alyutortsy considered the heads of "sour" fish a great delicacy. Southern [177] Koryaks, who were most exposed to Russian influence, boiled fish with cereals, mainly with rice. The meat and fat of sea animals (seal and occasionally white whale) were the favorite food of the coastal Koryaks.

All Koryaks used plant food in large quantities. Lily-root, sedge, wild sorrel and willow-herb were used as seasonings with fish and meat. Crowberry and blueberry were used in making hash (tolkusha)—a dish of grated reindeer or seal meat and fat with an admixture of edible roots and berries. The thick porridge prepared in this manner was a favorite [273] food. Cloudberry and blueberry were eaten raw; the latter was also used in making an intoxicating drink.

262 439 Among imported products, the Koryaks used tea and sugar. The use of flour, of which they made flatcakes, was very limited. Baked bread and zwieback were known only to the sedentary southern Koryaks, who came into close contact with Russians. Widely used was leaf tobacco, which 276 was smoked, but more often kept in the mouth, between the teeth and cheek. [175] All sources, from the very earliest, speak of the use of fly-agaric by the Koryaks as a stimulant.

Social Relations and Religious Beliefs

At the end of the 19th century, private ownership of the means of production predominated among the Koryaks. In the fields of production and distribution, however, there were numerous survivals of primitive-communal relations, especially among the coastal Koryaks.

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relations, especially among the coastal Koryaks. Thus, related families of Alyutortsy combined in summertime for common fishing. The catch was divided equally among them. Their sea hunting was also collective. From seven to eight persons went out to hunt together. On returning to the village, they divided the meat and fat of the seals killed during the hunt in equal shares among all the residents of the village; only the skin of the bearded or common seal went to the man who killed it. Kamentsy also shared equally the meat and fat of the seal they hunted in common, but sometimes the owner of the boat took a larger share. 175 433 476 22

The reindeer-breeding Alyutortsy also combined into 4-6 kindred families, which nomadized and herded their deer in common. These were productive associations of a temporary nature, similar to the temporary associations of fishermen and sea hunters. 175 621 233 476

According to 18th-19th-century data, the coastal Koryak family was already economically self-sufficient at that time. Individual families owned boats, nets, and traps, which they were free to use at their own discretion, down to selling them to other families. But there were also cases where nets belonged collectively to related families. 175 421

Even by the time of the Revolution, social inequality was not sharply expressed among the coastal Koryaks. They lived predominantly in a subsistence, consumption economy, with fur as the only commodity for sale. 175 433 184

The situation among the Chavchuvens was quite different. Even in the early part of the 18th century, Krasheninnikov wrote about the wealth of individual reindeer-breeders. Thus, already there was sharp property differentiation among the reindeer-breeders at that time. The process of stratification became still more intensified in the 19th century in connection with the development of trade. 175 184 233

At the time of the Revolution, there were among the reindeer-breeders men of great wealth, who owned herds of thousands of reindeer. On the other hand, there were householders owning only 10-15 reindeer and therefore compelled to work for the rich as herdsmen. Very often, distant relatives of the owners also became herdsmen; in such cases, family relations served as a cover for the usual exploitation. 421 466 556 [557]

In exchange for his hard labor in tending the reindeer, the herdsman received from his master only meat for his food and skins for his clothing, with the quantity of the compensation dependent entirely on the will of the master. The encampment of the rich Koryak usually included several families of herdsmen entirely dependent on their master economically and subject to his will in everything. The herdsmen could not kill a reindeer for food without the master's permission, and therefore often went hungry. In addition to tending reindeer, they performed a variety of other tasks: prepared firewood, brought water, hunted fur animals. The rich reindeer-breeder disposed of the labor of the herdsman's family as well. The herdsman's wife and daughters processed the reindeer skins for the master, made thread of reindeer sinew, sewed clothing and boots of reindeer-skins, etc. It was difficult for a herdsman to leave his master. Although custom permitted the changing of masters (in the fall, when the season began), in reality this was difficult to accomplish. The chief obstacle was the "debts" which the herdsman had managed to incur with his master: during the year he obtained from the latter small quantities of tea, sugar, flour, cartridges, etc. The master was not bound to provide imported goods; he merely had to "feed" his herdsmen. For a year's work, the herdsman received a female reindeer. As a rule, each herdsman owned 5-6, and only occasionally 10 or more, reindeer, earned by several years of hard labor. Naturally, with such a small number of reindeer it was impossible to live independently.

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175 184 233 421 466 [556] [178]

Among the reindeer-breeding Alyutortsy there were associations of families with small reindeer herds, bound by blood or affinal kinship. The typical correlation of reindeer in a herd owned in common by five households was: 5% + 10% + 20% + 25% + 30% = 90%. The other 10% of the herd usually belonged to sedentary relatives of the reindeer-breeders. Property inequality among the Alyutortsy was less pronounced than it was among the Chavchuvens. There were only a few cases where one of the co-owners in the association owned as much as 60% of the combined herd.

Thus, the backward forms of the Koryaks' subsistence economy fostered the preservation of communal relations among them.

174 178 614 [476] [609] [629] 178 614 178 184 622

The existence of clan relations among the Koryaks in the past is indicated by a number of aspects of their social life, and particularly by their family and marital ceremonials, which persisted into the first quarter of the 20th century. Among the survivals of clan organization we must note the custom of mutual assistance among related families, the custom forbidding outsiders to use the fire of an unrelated family, the residence (according to 18th-19th-century sources) of several related families in the same dwelling, the custom of vendetta, which survived until the early years of the 20th century, etc. In addition, the coastal Koryaks still retained traces of the institution of elders. In some of the villages there were persons called nym'elgen-an—"the guardian of the place," "the guardian of the past." This position could be held only by a man who was considered a descendant of the founder of the village. Each group of Koryaks headed by a nym'elgen-an had its own wooden image. In addition to the general designation of nym'elgen, the image also had its own name. Some of these names ("swallow," "duck") were of totemic character. Sacrifices were made to the images; they were "fed" and "dressed" in grass clothing.

175 61 [586] 178 587

Family relations at the end of the 19th century were based on patriarchal norms (patrilineal kinship, inheritance from father to son, patrilocal marriage). Along with this, there were survivals of matriarchy, the most distinct of which was the granting of children to the mother in case of divorce.

Among the remnants of extinct forms of group marriage were the surviving custom of the sororate, according to which a widower must marry the younger sister, younger cousin or niece of his dead wife, and the custom of the levirate, according to which a younger brother had to marry the widow of his older brother; in the absence of a brother, this duty devolved on the nephew or cousin of the dead husband. However, such survivals of group marriage as the Chukchi "association by wife" were already unknown among the Koryaks in the 18th century.

58

The most common method of contracting a marriage was by working for the wife. Under this custom, the groom had to work from 2-3 months to three years in the family of his future father-in-law, taking part in tending reindeer and other tasks. After the expiration of the work period, the groom performed the so-called ceremony of "catching the bride": the bride ran about in the house, and the groom had to catch her, tear her clothing, and touch her bare body. The bride's relative's present at the ceremony tried to hinder this in every way, beat the groom with twigs, pushed him away, and so on.

776 [771] [153]

According to Koryak religion, the whole world was inhabited by a multitude of harmful beings—nin'vit's. The nin'vit's were invisible, but could become visible if they chose. They appeared to people in the form of anthropomorphic creatures, with huge ears, burning eyes (sometimes with one eye, sometimes with three), with long sharp teeth and a body covered with thick black fur. It was thought that the nin'vit's hunted and ate people by entering them and causing illness. To placate the nin'vit's, the Koryaks

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Images of ancestor spirits:
1—having "descendants"; 2—one without living "descendants."

To placate the nin'vits, the koryaks sacrificed to them. Thus, a hunter passing by a place considered to be inhabited by a nin'vit' had to make a sacrifice of a pinch of tobacco or several cartridges. The places inhabited by nin'vit's were very numerous; they were cliffs of unusual formation, hot springs or waterfalls, places where a corpse had been burned or a hunter perished, the ruins of a dwelling, abandoned after the death of one of its inhabitants, and so forth. Koryak ideas about the dead were ambivalent. They held that after death a person became a nin'vit', that is, a harmful, hostile being. At the same time, there was the notion of ancestors who lived somewhere underground or in the sky and helped their descendants, sending them success in the hunt, protecting their herds, etc. Ancestor images were made of wood. They were small, crudely carved wooden figures (kalak), representing a sitting or, more rarely, a standing person, with a flat face, without a nose, with two hollows in the place of eyes and a rather large hollow to indicate the mouth. During family celebrations the mouth-hole was filled with fat or fat meat. Every family had whole bundles of kalaks; every Koryak had his own kalak—his personal guardian.

776 [782] [778] 775 776 [778] 532 [782]

The Koryaks believed that the shaman had power over nin'vit's. The shaman communicated with nin'vit's in total darkness; the entrance to the dwelling was carefully closed, the smoke vent was stopped up with a bundle of grass, the hearth fire was put out. The shaman struck his tambourine, cried out fragmentary words and phrases, danced and sang.

756 789

The shaman's actions were usually stimulated by intoxication from the fly-agaric eaten beforehand. When he tired, the shaman fell asleep. The Koryaks believed that the "prophetic fly-agaric" led him into the next world and arranged meetings with dead kinsmen, from whom the shaman obtained the necessary instructions. On awakening from his long sleep, the shaman related his visions to the people around him.

[276]

The Koryak shaman did not have any special dress. He performed his rituals in the usual clothing, which differed from the rest only in the large number of tags and disks of skin or beads attached to it. Some shamans made slight changes in their dress during the ritual performance, such as wearing a man's boot on one foot, and a woman's on the other. The tambourine was narrow-rimmed.

756 291

In addition to professional shamanism, the Koryaks also practiced family shamanism, predominantly in the hands of women. This was closely bound to the cult of the family hearth. Every member born in a family was regarded as a reincarnation of an ancestor. The exact identity of the ancestor was learned with the aid of divination. For this purpose, a stone in a leather pouch was suspended from a small tripod. The eldest member of the family

756 789 553 [775]

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Preparations for burning a corpse.

756 pronounced in succession the names of the dead ancestors until the stone
787 shook at the sound of the name. Then the family felt that the name had been
553 guessed, and it was given to the newborn.

The reindeer-breeding and the sedentary Koryaks held various seasonal celebrations. The main holiday of the reindeer-breeders was the spring
796 kil'vey—the festival of horns. It was celebrated after the calving, when the
184 herd was brought to the encampment. The people brought out of their dwell-
22 ings bowls with pieces of meat and the sacred wooden fire-making device which they proceeded to "feed." In autumn, they celebrated the festival of the autumn deer slaughter. This festival was also attended by shamanistic performances, sacrifices, and the "feeding" of the wooden fire-maker. The coastal hunters celebrated the festival of floating the baydar in the spring, at the beginning of the spring hunting season. At this time they sacrificed dogs. After the celebration, they opened the summer entrance to the semi-dugout. After the closing of the autumn sea hunting season (in November) the coastal Koryaks held the "seal festival" (in olden times it was the "whale festival"). The participants in the celebration pleaded with the animals killed during the hunt to return to the sea and let themselves be caught again next year, and also to bring along their relatives with them. The dead
773 animals were replaced by zoomorphic representations made of seaweed.

The creator of men and the universe, according to Koryak beliefs, was An'an' or Etyny. However, when man was being created, the harmful being, Nen'vetgyyn'yn, intervened. It took out the hard hearts of the first men and substituted clay hearts; this led to all the weaknesses, diseases and misfortunes among men.

825 The Koryaks regarded wolves as their relatives (some sources also name
[784] the bear). The wolf was described as a shaman animal. Even in the 20th century, many Alyutortsy strictly observed the taboo on killing wolves, which, of course, had an extremely adverse effect on their reindeer-breeding.
764 The Koryaks burned the bodies of their dead.

Folk Arts

773 The Koryaks had a cycle of myths closely akin to those of the Chukchi and Itel'mens, and similar to the Eskimos'. The principal character of these myths is the raven-creator (in Koryak, Kuykynnyaku or Kutkynnyaku) which, according to the beliefs of these peoples, gave people all their material goods: he gave men reindeer and dogs, and taught them reindeer-breeding, fishing, sea hunting, and the use of dog transportation. In some of the myths, the image of the raven is fused with the image of the Etyny. But most

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of the legends describe the various adventures and tricks of the raven; they 773
represent him as a cunning lecherous old man who constantly deceives his wife Miti and his numerous sons and daughters.

Some of the legends deal with the adventures of the raven's older son Ememkut (or Amamkut), a much nobler and more heroic figure than his father. The characters in the legends about the raven Kuykynnyaku and about Ememkut are half-human, half-animal: wolf-like, bear-like, fox-like, magpie-like and partridge-like creatures, a root-man, a grass-woman, and many others. These beings act like people, but they also possess the qualities of the animal or plant whose name they bear.

Historical legends, in contrast to the myths which are prevalent among 173
all the Koryaks, are of a local nature: each territorial group of Koryaks has [184]
its own cycle of legends. The Chavchuvens, for example, have stories of clashes with Chukchi; the Apukintsy, of clashes with reindeer-breeding [648]
Chavchuvens; the Palantsy, of wars with the Evens. The legends of each cycle are centered about the figure of a hero, who is different for every Koryak group. He is called enkhivyl''yn (literally—"strong man," a term close to the Russian "bogatyr'").

However, the figures of the heroes of all legendary cycles are endowed with the same traits; there are also recurrent motifs, such as attacks on sleeping enemies, deception of enemies with the aid of dummies, or turning enemies to flight by hitting dry skins, creating the sound of footsteps of a rapidly approaching, noisy horde, etc.

Of special interest in Koryak folklore are stories about masters and 773
their workers. These reflect the social stratification which was so pronounced among reindeer-breeding Koryaks at the time of the Revolution. A special subdivision of folk literature dealing with daily life consisted of tales about lucky and unlucky hunters. The Koryaks had also borrowed many Russian tales, but these were changed to such an extent that they were often difficult to distinguish.

The Koryaks had few proverbs and riddles. Their songs were also few. 538

Among their musical instruments, we must also mention, in addition to 534
the tambourine, the vanniyayar—literally, "tooth tambourine." This was a device widely found in Siberia: it consisted of a bone or iron plate, with a little tongue cut out in the center. At the base of this tongue was a tiny hole, through which a cord of reindeer sinew was drawn. The plate is held between the lips and the cord is pulled. The vibration of the little tongue produces a low, monotonous hum, resembling the muted sounds of a tambourine; the mouth cavity serves as the resonator.

Dances were usually performed during the seasonal celebrations. These 535
were ritualistic, almost always representing extremely naturalistic imitations of the movements of seal, bears, reindeer and ravens. They were ac- [533]
companied with a characteristic, deeply guttural, hoarse singing. The dancers were chiefly women.

At the seasonal festivals there were also various games and contests: 796
wrestling, foot races, reindeer and dog races, and tossing of people in seal 526
skins.

The Koryaks produced a large variety of artistic objects of bone, skins, 32
the skin and hair of reindeer, silk, copper and iron plates, etc. The men 531
made bone tobacco boxes with carved or engraved figures of animals, birds 532
and men; bone pipes, ornamented with lead or tin and decorated with figures 462
of bears, wolves, dogs, reindeer, and seals. The women specialized in fur ornamentation with beads, silk and reindeer hair. The fur patterns adorning 794
the hems of Koryak clothes and hats were in the form of mosaics of pieces 531
of black and white reindeer fur. They were either geometrical (squares, [462]

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Samples of ornamentation on hems of fur clothing.

rectangles, triangles and circles), or representational (figures of reindeer, stylized animals and birds, fantastic plants).

531 Beads, silk and reindeer hair were used to decorate boots, mittens, matchboxes, and a variety of bags and pouches. Another craft practiced by
285 women and particularly developed among the Karagintsy was the weaving of
462 baskets, bags and boxes of dry grass.

Contemporary Life

175
648 In December 1917, the Soviet regime was established on Kamchatka. The civil war which soon broke out in the Far East did not allow the launching of economic and cultural work on the territory inhabited by the Koryaks. In the beginning of 1918, Kolchak's appointees took over Kamchatka. In 1920, an underground revolutionary committee organized an uprising in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, leading to the restoration of Soviet rule. In 1921, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, Gizhiga and Nayakhan were occupied by a White Guard detachment under Captain Bochkarev. The Petropavlovsk Revolutionary Committee was compelled to withdraw into the mountains. Since

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the White Guards occupied only the largest populated centers, the Soviet government in effect continued to exist in the uyezds. Representatives of the Revolutionary Committee directed the struggle of the local population against the White troops. Thus, a Red guerrilla unit was organized from among the Russians and natives (Koryaks and Itel'mens) of the Tigil'skiy Rayon. In pursuing the Whites, retreating to the Okhotsk coast, this unit crossed the entire territory of the present Koryak (National) Okrug by dog team in wintertime. Together with the Red Army unit which had occupied the city of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy by this time (1922), the Russian-Koryak guerrilla unit took part in mopping up the remnants of Bochkarev's gang near the village of Nayakhan. Individual Whites who managed to escape from Nayakhan and Gizhiga were finished off by the Red Army unit with the direct participation of Koryak reindeer-breeders in the area of Korfa Bay. 175 648

The winter of 1922-23 marked the final establishment of the Soviet government on Koryak territory. The short rule of the Whites had been attended by open looting of the population; the reindeer-breeding Koryaks of Taygonos Peninsula suffered most of all, since the White units confiscated their reindeer for transportation and food. The representative of the White government in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy granted Japanese capitalists the exclusive fishing rights within an area that included the present Koryak National Okrug. Japanese and American traders were also given the freedom to purchase furs from the natives.

During the early years of the Soviet regime (1923-1926), the uyezd, and later the rayon revolutionary committees had to do a great deal of work in order to overcome the grave effects of the civil war.

In 1930, after the First Congress of Soviets of Kamchatka, wide activity was launched in organizing local soviets, cooperatives and various socio-cultural institutions. Particular attention was given to the development of Soviet trade. New trading centers were established in a number of villages, where Koryaks were able to obtain essential provisions, hunting guns and ammunition. The establishment of fixed prices on furs and reindeer skins made it possible for the Koryaks to start improving their economic level. 175 439

A large role in raising the cultural level of the Koryak population was played by the cultural base opened on the Penzhina River in 1930 by the Committee to Assist the Peoples of the North. The establishment of an independent Koryak National Okrug (December 1930) stimulated the further successes of economic and cultural construction among the Koryaks.

Collectivization among the Koryaks, particularly among the nomadic reindeer-breeders, was conducted under conditions of class struggle. The wealthy Chavchuven reindeer-breeders destroyed large parts of their herds and did everything they could to interfere with the collective farms. 648 474 233

The remnants of primitive-communal relations which had masked exploitation at first impeded the unification of individual households into collective farms. The first forms of cooperative associations among the Koryaks were societies for the common herding of reindeer. Later, the principal form of association was the cooperative. 177 [471]

The development of collective farms entailed transition to sedentary life. The process of settling down was especially complex and difficult for the reindeer-breeders, both because of their traditionally nomadic existence, and because of the conditions of the reindeer-breeding industry itself; the change of pastures demanded frequent migrations. In the transition to sedentary life, this complex problem was solved as follows: pastures were assigned to individual collectives, and the tending and care of the herds were put in the hands of special brigades of herders, which accompanied the herds. The rest of the collective-farm

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members lived permanently in the villages, engaging in fishing and other work.

The work and life of the herders has also been organized quite differently from what was the case in the past. Each herding brigade has a yaranga. The brigade usually consists of 4-5 herders, a brigadier, a timekeeper and a woman "tent worker," whose duties include preparation of hot meals, mending clothes, and keeping the tent clean.

There are also new elements in the technique of pasturing. Especial stress is laid today on cultivation of new pastures and planned utilization of the old. The collective herd is distributed among various pastures, and an exact itinerary and timetable are set for the herd's migrations. For the purpose of guarding the herd and preserving the young, as well as for the better organization of pasturing and saving of labor, the herders today use riding horses in summer, and reindeer dogs in winter—a method entirely unknown to the Koryaks in the past. Various new methods in the organization and technique of reindeer-breeding are combined with expanded veterinary services. Energetic struggle is waged with epizootics, measures are taken to improve the breed of the reindeer, and so forth.

[874] In 1947 an agricultural school for leading collective-farm personnel was opened in the village of Palana. This school trains specialists in reindeer-breeding—brigadiers, timekeepers, etc.

The collectives of the Koryak National Okrug own herds of many thousands of reindeer, and the productivity of the reindeer-breeding farms is rising. Thus, the Kirov collective (Tigil'skiy Rayon) increased its reindeer herd several times over during the postwar years. The incomes of the collectives in this branch of their economy have risen correspondingly.

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In the coastal collectives, the principal occupation is fishing. The development of fishing collectives is closely connected with the development of the fishing industry in the Koryak National Okrug. During the Five-Year Plans, a large, technically well-equipped socialist fishing industry of nationwide importance has been created in the Koryak National Okrug. The establishment of industrial fishing has greatly affected the development and consolidation of fishing collectives.

The fishing cooperatives are served by the Motor-Fishing Stations (MRS), which have charge of motorized and motorless fleets. The MRS conduct activities to improve the fishermen's skills, teaching the Koryak collective-farm members new skills as brigadiers, motormen, etc. The chief fishing tools today, in place of the old primitive nets, are new and improved stationary, sweep and bag nets. The skin baydar has been entirely supplanted by motored and special motorless boats.

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Along with the principal branches of activity, such as fishing and reindeer-breeding, the Koryak collectives are developing gardening and livestock-raising. Attempts to expand agricultural activities were made before the Revolution as well, but even among the sedentary Koryaks they produced no substantial results. The poorly worked earth gave low yields, and the crops often were killed by early frosts. Besides, the Koryaks had very inadequate knowledge of tending gardens or the use of agricultural tools. Livestock-breeding fared no better; the maintenance of livestock on green fodder all year lowered the milk yield of the cows to a minimum.

Gardening and animal husbandry began to develop among the Koryaks after 1930. A large role in this was played by Russian workers and the local Soviet intelligentsia, who helped the collective livestock-breeders and gardeners both by personal example and by teaching them. Quite often, Russian women came to the collectives and demonstrated methods of planting and preparing vegetables; they also taught the Koryaks how to tend

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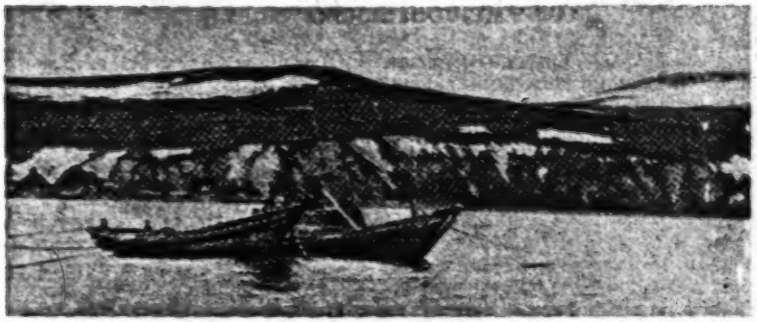

Catching salmon with stationary seines. Molotov collective, Olyutorskiy Rayon, Kamchatskaya Oblast.

cattle. The most favorable conditions for the development of vegetable-gardening exist in the Tigil'skiy Rayon. Today, some of the collectives of this rayon not only produce enough vegetables to meet their own needs, but also grow them for sale.

The income of the collectives from auxiliary enterprises, and principally from fur-hunting, is also rising.

At present, there are several millionaire collectives in the Koryak National Okrug. On the leading collective of the Tigil'skiy Rayon, the Kirov collective, the capital fund reached the figure of 2,000,000 rubles in 1951. This collective was organized in 1941 on the basis of an association for the common pasturing of reindeer. The funds of other collectives are also rising. In 1951, the capital funds of the "Path of the North" and the "Beacon of the North" collectives of Penzhinskiy Rayon reached 1,500,000 rubles.

Simultaneously with the growth and consolidation of the collective farms, there is improvement in the life of the Koryak collective-farm members. The collective villages have become larger and more comfortable. The old semidugout has almost disappeared. Today the collective-farm members live in houses of the Russian type—spacious wooden houses with glass windows. Many new villages have sprung up in the tundra as a result of the transition to sedentary life and the enlargement of collective farms. These include Sedanka Kochevaya (Tigil'skiy Rayon), Krestovoye (Penzhinskiy Rayon), the I. V. Stalin collective-farm village (Penzhinskiy Rayon), and others. In the Karaginskiy Rayon, at a spot where there was only one dugout in 1934, there is today a new rayon center—the large village of Ossora.

The modern Koryak village usually consists of several dozen dwellings and farm buildings, as well as buildings housing cultural and other institutions. Among the collective-farm buildings we must note the stables, which are an innovation among the Koryaks. In all the villages there are bathhouses, bakeries and stores. A great deal of attention is paid to the construction of cultural institutions. In every village there is a school (often with a dormitory), a club or a reading room with a library, a medical or a medical-assistant station, and a nursery. Many villages have been supplied with electricity and radio.

The former dispersion of individual areas of Koryak habitation is steadily being overcome. The means of local communication are being improved. Motorized transport (cutters, etc.) is widely used in

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Preparation of seines. Korfa Motor-Fishing Station.

Motorized transport (cutters, etc.) is widely used in summertime. In winter, dog and reindeer transportation are still important.

The general rise in the material well-being of the collective-farm Koryaks has been reflected in increased consumption of bought food products and other commodities. In the present Koryak diet important places are held by such food products as flour, cereals, sugar and other commodities bought in the local store. In recent years, bought urban-type clothing has become increasingly widespread, but side by side with it the Koryaks retain their national dress, especially their winter dress, which is well adapted to the severe climate of the okrug.

Cultural construction, launched after the organization of the okrug, has achieved marked results. Before the Revolution, the Koryaks were illiterate. In the two parochial schools which existed in the area in 1916 there were only 13 Koryak children. Wide school construction began from the very first years of the Soviet regime. In 1925, schools were opened in a number of villages. The school in the village of Tilichiki was reorganized into a boarding school for children of the nomads.

Before World War II, there were 30 Koryak schools in the okrug; in 1951 there were already 97 primary, seven-year and secondary schools (27 of these were boarding schools).

The personnel for the national schools is trained in the pedagogic school in the village of Tigil'. In the course of its existence, the school has trained more than 100 teachers, including Koryaks. Young Koryak students receive advanced teachers' training in Khabarovsk. A number of graduates of the Khabarovsk Pedagogical Institute work in the schools of the Koryak National Okrug. Among the students of the Department of the Peoples of the Far North at the Herzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad there are Koryak students who specialize in the languages, history and economics of the northern peoples.

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Before the Revolution, the Koryaks did not have any writing. They had some beginnings of pictographic writing, but it was used on a very limited scale. In 1932, the first Koryak primer was published, based on the Latin alphabet adopted at the time. Koryak literary language was established on the basis of the Chavchuven dialect. In 1937, a new Koryak alphabet was developed on the basis of Russian letters.

Textbooks for elementary schools are published in Koryak, as are political and literary works. The books published in Koryak include the works of Koryak writers. In addition to the okrug newspaper, Koryakskiy Kommunist, many rayon papers are published in the Koryak National Okrug. [214]

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Cultural work among the Koryaks is conducted by the village clubs, reading huts, libraries and houses of culture. The specific conditions of Koryak life have demanded special forms of cultural activity (especially in connection with the herders' brigades). This has been accomplished by the mobile Red Yarangas.

Wide political and cultural-educational work is being conducted among the Koryak women. Special departments have been set up at the Rayon Committees of the Communist Party to direct this work, and every collective farm has its own women's soviet. With the aid of the active leadership, the women's soviets organize classes for the semiliterate, read newspapers, draw women into active social life. The sanitary and other committees of the women's soviets help working Koryak women to keep the dwellings clean and hygienic, organize various circles (sanitary circles, cutting and sewing circles, etc.), advise women on various questions of culture and daily life, and help in the rearing of children.

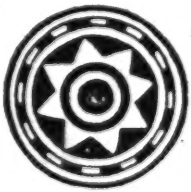
During the years of socialist construction, a wide network of various medical institutions has developed on the territory of the okrug. In 1952 there were 5 hospitals and 14 health centers in the Karaginskiy Rayon alone. [143]

Religious ideas and the rituals connected with them are receding into the past. Dances and games have lost all their ceremonial significance, and are now merely gay diversions and sports. The traditional reindeer and dog races are now the closing feature of all Soviet holidays.

The Party organization of the okrug includes in its ranks many Koryaks. Among them are propagandists, newspaper editors, and workers of the Rayon Committees of the CPSU.

Many Koryaks have acquired technical and other skills formerly unknown among them, and have become motormen, radio operators, accountants, bookkeepers, zootechnicians, and workers in public health and education.

Most of the deputies of local soviets, people's judges and assessors are members of the local nationalities. The Koryaks have their elected representatives in the Kamchatskaya Oblast Soviet of Workers' Deputies and in the supreme government organ—the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.



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